

Some Queries concerning Liberty of Conscience, directed to *William Penn* and *Henry Care*.

1. Friends, Is this Liberty of Conscience, for which you so much contend, design'd only for Christians, and perhaps Jews; or must it also be extended to Mahometans and Pagans?
2. Must not the *Indians*, who worship the Devil, to keep him from doing them mischief, come under the Wings of this your Christian Liberty?
3. The *Indians* under the *Spaniards*, who complained, that they were not suffer'd to worship their Pagods once a year, when the *Spaniards* worship'd their Pagods every day: Had they not just Reason for their Complaint, as being debar'd the Exercise of their Religion? And was it not strange, that the Christian Idolaters should be to the Pagan Idolaters so harsh and rigorous, and should thus disturb and molest them in their way of Worship, being so like their own?
4. Are not the Laws of *Carolina* too strait-laced in your Opinion, which tolerate only those that believe a God: For perhaps you may think, that even profest Atheists may be useful Subjects, and fit to be employed by Princes?
5. Is not that which you call Liberty of Conscience, in reality a general License for Blasphemy and Idolatry? Or in words more at length, Do not you intend, that the grossest Idolatries, and the most horrid Blasphemies, shall have their free and full swing, without the least Punishment or Restraint?
6. The Kings of *Judah* that beat down Idolatrous Worship, and who are vulgarly reputed good Kings, were they not in your judgment, inhumane Persecutors for Matters of meer Religion, and Usurpers of Gods Empire over the Conscience?
7. Friend *Penn*, Dost thou believe in the Council of *Lateran*? If thou dost not, thou art not so good a Catholick as some take thee to be?
8. Doth not a Decree of that Council oblige all good Catholicks to Extirpate Heresie?
9. Is not then the *Northern* Heresie to be Extirpated?
10. And is not all this pains taken for its Extirpation?
11. Can any thing free good Catholicks from the Obligation of that Decree, save only their want of Power to perform it?
12. When ever they get that Power, doth not the Obligation return?
13. Can you, with all your Skill, tie up a future Popish Parliament? I mean, King and Parliament?
14. Is not an immutable humane Law, a Monster in Nature? And do not you dream, or would make us believe, that your *Magna Charta* shall be such a Monster?
15. Will not your *Magna Charta* be void from the beginning, if it want the Pops Confirmation?
16. Doth not *Comenius* the Jesuite, (a famous Writer of Church-Politics) recommend Liberty of Conscience, for a proper and effectual means, (as the Case may be) to propagate the *Roman Catholick* Faith? And can there be any Case more fit for it, than where the Papists are inferior in Strength and Number, and Superiour in Favour?

17. Doth not *Coleman* in his Tryal deny that he ever design'd to bring in Popery by force, or any other way save only by a Toleration?

18. If all Sects have full Liberty, and one Sect have all the Favour and Preferment, will not that Sect soon out-grow and over-top the rest? And will not all that are in Office, and all that expect or desire to be, (that is, almost all the Men of Parts and Industry in the Nation) have a strong temptation to be of that Sect?

19. Can you inform us of any Government, either past or present, wherein there are not some Qualifications required by Law, for those that take Publick Offices and Employments? Which thing You call Tramelling and Cramping the Government?

20. If a Kingdom should be in danger of being over-run with Mahometanism, and to prevent it a Law were made, obliging all Publick Officers to make open profession of the Christian Faith, and solemnly to renounce the *Alcoran*, or some of the maddest Points of it; is not even this, in your Opinion, a Cramping and putting Tramells upon the Government? And were not such a Law null and void, think you; as debarring the Prince that Liberty of Employing whom he pleaseth, and Mahometans among the rest, which by the Law of Nature is inherent in his Person? And might you not farther say, That Mahometan or Turkish Subjects may be very useful to a Prince, and that it were very unreasonable by such pernicious Religious Tests to deprive him of their Service? And if he be minded to have Turks in his Household, either in part or wholly, and Turkish Magistrates, Turkish Ministers and Counsellors, Turkish Officers and Soldiers; and even whole Turkish Regiments, whole Turkish Garrisons, whole Turkish Armies; why should any Laws hinder him? And why may he not fill the Church Dignities with Turkish Priests, what ever the Laws say to the contrary? And tho' these things tend plainly to the Destruction of the Kingdom, what matter is it?

21. Which ought to be esteemed of greater Authority? The Opinion of Four men in Red Gowns (purged and garbled for the purpose, and having the Rod still over their Backs) which asserts the Dispensing Power; or the declared Judgment of two Parliaments at least, which denies it and damns it?

22. Were not those four Men like the Speaking Head; and only seem'd to give a sound to those words, which were spoken in another Room? And were they not plainly at this Lock, Say as you are bid, or out you go, as others have gone before you?

23. Was not the Martyr a sneaking Novice in the Art of Remy-ty, when he labour'd the Judges underhand, and in the Case of Ship-money? Whereas now things are carried openly and bravely?

24. Friends, Do you intend to have the Oath of Supremacy taken away among the other Tests?

25. Is not this Oath a Civil Test, tho' it may seem in some sort Religious? Since it is only a Renouncing of a Foreign Usurp'd Power: And though this Power be Spiritual, yet it draws Temporals with it, and our Civil Liberties are concern'd; for we cannot pretend to Civil Liberty, if we are under Spiritual Bondage?

26. Is not the designing and endeavouring to enslave Ones Country to a Foreign Usurp'd Power, High Treason in its own Nature, tho' there were no positive Law against it?

27. Is it not just and necessary, that persons who are openly carrying on a Design so destructive, should be excluded from all Publick Command and Authority; thereby to keep them from having power to accomplish their wicked Intentions?

28. Should not a Promissory Clause be added to this Oath, whereby they that take it must solemnly Swear, That they will never promote the setting up, or restoring the Popes Authority

Authority in this Kingdom, or give their consent to it, but that they will oppose it by all Lawful ways and means to the utmost of their power.

29. Is it not the same thing in effect, to set up the Popes power and to put those in Office and Authority that will? And is it not the same thing, to put Papists in Office and to make them capable? For if they be once made capable, will they not have all the Offices, Commands and Dignities both in Church and State?

30. Must not your Divine Magna Charta have a standing Army of Mercenaries to support it? And will not this Mercenary Army be essential to our Religion, as well as to our Civil Liberties? And must there not be in it good store of Dragons?

31. Why are not our Civil Liberties a little in your thoughts, as well as the Liberties of Religion? Seeing without the former, the latter will not be long lived. And why are you not likewise hammering a Magna Charta for the Corporations? Will you not restore them to their ancient Freedom? For will not our Trade in a short time decay, and at last be totally ruined, if our Corporations (that manage it) be extinguished?

32. Doth not their Condition affect the whole Kingdom, since four parts of five of those that Represent us in Parliament, are by them chosen?

33. What Shadow of Liberty have we left, if our Representatives be not free? And how can these be free, if those that choose them be at Will and Pleasure, and in downright Servitude?

34. Are they not like to be brave Champions for the Peoples Interest when they can not come to be chosen but by the Kings appointment, and both they and their Electors depend upon the Crown?

35. Is not a Prince that makes Laws with a Parliament of his own Nomination as absolute as He whose Edicts are Laws? And are not the Peoples Estates, their Liberties, and their Lives, wholly in his power?

36. Is not our Constitution, and the frame of our Government, quite altered by this Hellish Conivance? And are not the Foundations of our Liberty totally subverted and destroyed? And hath not our Striving against Popery brought in slavery into the Bargain? And what ever becomes of our Religion, is not our Liberty lost for ever?

37. Friends, is not your Magna Charta concerned in this Matter?

38. Will not the Parliament now sitting, when they have razed away the Tithes and Penal Laws, be dissolved soon after?

39. And will not the new Parliament after that, or at least the Major part of it, (as Corporations now stand) be certainly Roman Catholics?

40. What advantage it to provide against undue Returns, which your Friends, some of your party have been weekly offering at, if we shall be continually voting in the Elections, they being in the hands of the Papists?

41. Do they not deserve to be Hang'd for Fools, that cannot govern Elections, when they may put in and put out the Electors at their pleasure?

42. Will it not therefore be a thing of no difficulty to establish Popery by a Law? And then, will not your Magna Charta be dam'd much easier than it was made?

43. Though it be made unalterable by a Clause as strong as can be devised, will they not first repeal that Clause, and then down goes Magna Charta?

44. Is it not the opinion of good Catholics, that no Faith is to be kept with Hereticks?

45. How can we rely upon that Mans Promises, who will be told by those whom he must believe, that 'tis meritorious to break them, and damnation to keep them?

46. Were not He a rare Catholick indeed, who by sparing and indulging Hereticks, whom he hates, would damn his own Soul?

47. Is it not also the opinion of good Catholicks, that Hereticks ought not to have common Justice? Which was the way in *France*, before they fell to Dragooning.

48. Will it not in a while be found expedient to revive the *Writ de Heretico comburendo*? The poor Hereticks thought themselves very cunning in taking away that Writ; as if the Catholicks could not restore it, when they have got the power.

49. Will not the *Writ de Excommunicatione* serve to pretty well in the mean time? Since they may with ease excommunicate all the Hereticks, and then lay them in Jail. Which is as good as Hanging or Burning them. And now we talk of Jails.

50. Is not the *Habeas Corpus Act* a Cramping and Trammelling of the Government, and therefore fit to be graciously dispens'd with? Or to save that labour, will not the Parliament that repeals the *Tells*, repeal that Act likewise, with all other Acts of the like nature?

51. Would it not be a brave Exchange, if they that set up the new *Magna Charta*, should give up the Old one?

52. Can it in good sadness be reasonably expected, that a religious and devoted Prince, should draw the guilt of Sacrilege upon his own Head, by not restoring Abbey Lands when it shall be in his power to do it? And will not the Directors of his Conscience be sure to mind him of it, and put it home to him?

53. Will not the thing in a very short time be clearly in his power, and be easily accomplished by the same Methods, by which the Penal Laws were repealed? That is, by a prudent directing and managing the Elections, and framing (we must not say packing) a Parliament for the purpose.

54. Must we not therefore have three Parliaments yet, to compleat our Happiness? One to repeal the *Tells* and Penal Laws, another to establish *Popery*, and the third to restore Church Lands. And hath not the last Parliament, which gave the money, thereby in effect done all the rest.

55. When these things are finish'd, will there be any further need of Parliaments? Will not a Standing Army supply their place? And may we not hope for the felicities of a *French Government*?

56. Since this *French Government* is already set up in *New England*, why should we not have it here? And is not a good sign that in due time we may have it?

57. Had not all these good Works been finish'd long since, if a certain late *Tulcan* King had not been a great sluggard and Coward? And suffer'd himself to be so basely baffled out of his Declarations of Indulgence? For which his Soul might have roard in Purgatory to this day, if his Holiness had not stood his Friend. Here I thought to have roard, but another Question crowds in, and I cannot keep it back.

58. If other means prove ineffectual, will it not be convenient (for the quicker dispatch of Hereticks) to dispense with the Penal Laws against Murder, that so they may be taken off, without the dull formalities of Law?

FINIS